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## **Employment of Warsaw Pact Forces Against NATO**

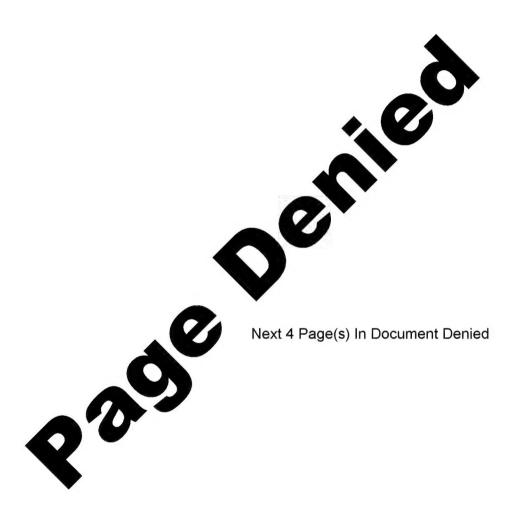
Interagency Intelligence Memorandum

**Top Secret** 

NI IIM 83-10002

July 1983

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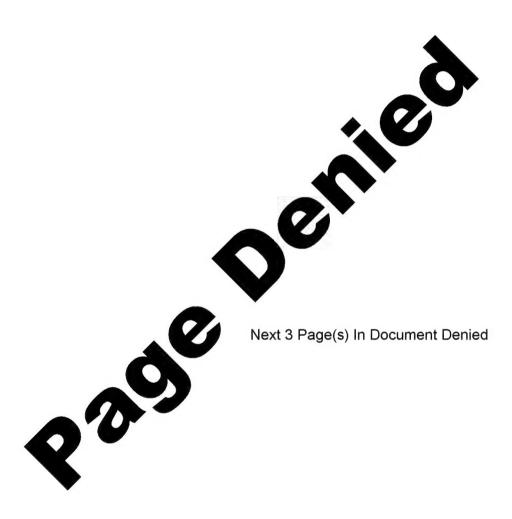


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NI IIM 83-10002
EMPLOYMENT OF WARSAW PACT FORCES AGAINST NATO
Information available as of 1 April 1983 was used in the preparation of this Memorandum.
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	Р	REFACE			
This Interagen	cv Intelligen	ice Memorandum w	as commissioned by		C to
the Director of Cer	tral Intellige	ence. It was drafted	originally as a third		
	•	saw Pact Forces Op e assessment in volum			
of Warsaw Pact the	eater operati	ions against NATO.	Because the discus-		
		and assessments of issued as an Inters	_		
Memorandum.					25X
		es a detailed discussi tions and Soviet pl	_		
nuclear operations.	It also discus	sses Warsaw Pact op	otions for campaigns		Sign of the state
		Southwestern, and their associated na			
Memorandum revi	ews a spectr	rum of options for	the structuring and		25V4
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		ding to war, the cones, and other scenari			OFY
		produced under th			25 <b>X</b> ′
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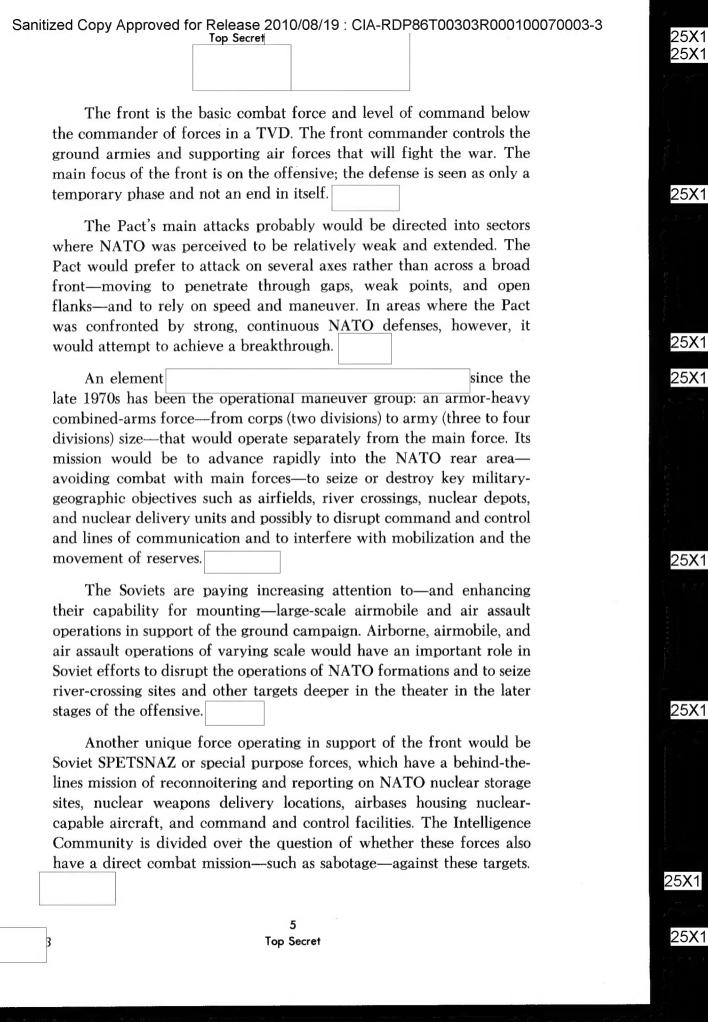
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SUMMARY	
EMPLOYMENT OF WARSAW PACT FORCES AGAINST NATO	
The USSR's geographic position as a major continental power in Europe and Asia and the Soviet perception that hostile neighbors confront the USSR and its allies on virtually every side have led the Warsaw Pact to develop contingency plans for military operations on all its land and maritime frontiers. The Soviets clearly expect Central Europe to be the decisive arena in a war with NATO and assign it the highest priority in the allocation of military manpower and equipment.	25X1
The Soviets also have plans for offensive action in other NATO regions flanking Central Europe, but we have little direct evidence on the Pact's view of the timing of these flank offensives in relation to an offensive in Central Europe. Nonetheless, even if they did not begin major ground offensives immediately in some flank areas, the Pact would conduct secondary offensives to keep NATO from shifting forces to Central Europe, to compel commitment of NATO reserves, and to weaken NATO forces on the flanks in anticipation of further operations.	
The Pact's success in achieving its wartime objectives would depend on the Soviets' ability to control and coordinate multinational, joint-service operations of great complexity. All Pact member nations have command and control elements intended to help extend the Soviets' wartime control structure. These organs could be integrated easily into a Pact command structure. In a NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict, the Soviet Supreme High Command (Verkhovnoye Glavnokomandovaniye—VGK) would function, in effect, as the Supreme High Command of the Combined Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact. This wartime command would provide the military-strategic leadership for all Pact military operations against NATO.	25X1 25X1
We believe that, should a war occur between the Warsaw Pact and NATO, intermediate commands would be established in Europe between the General Staff in Moscow and most operating forces (fronts and fleets). These commands would exercise direct operational control	
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over Soviet and Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) forces and at least would coordinate the operations of those strategic assets allocated to support operations in a specific area. The Soviets refer to these headquarters as High Commands of Forces in a designated area or strategic axis. Two such commands, the High Command of Forces in the Western Theater of Military Operation (teatr voyennykh deystviy—TVD) and the High Command of Forces in the Southwestern TVD since the late 1970s.  We believe that these high commands would be established in the event of a NATO-Warsaw Pact war.	25X1 25X1 25X1
Soviet strategists envision at least five European TVDs in which military operations against NATO would be undertaken:	
<ul> <li>The Western TVD, which would include Soviet and NSWP forces in East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia and Soviet forces in the western USSR as well as the Combined Baltic Fleet.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>The Southwestern TVD, which would include Soviet forces in Hungary and the southwestern USSR; Bulgarian, Romanian, and Hungarian forces; and the Combined Black Sea Fleet.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>The Northwestern TVD, which would include Soviet forces in the Leningrad Military District and elements of the Soviet Northern Fleet.</li> </ul>	
— The Atlantic and Arctic TVDs, which would encompass the North Atlantic and the Norwegian Sea and would include forces primarily from the Soviet Northern Fleet	25X1
Frontal Operations	
Within a land TVD, the largest field force would be a front. Although not directly comparable to any Western organization, a front would be similar to a NATO army group and its associated air forces in size, level of command, and function. There is no standard organization for a front. It usually is composed of three to five ground armies, each including three to five tank or motorized rifle divisions, and air forces with as many as several hundred tactical aircraft. A front operating in a maritime sector also might include those naval elements that were chiefly devoted to that front's mission, that is, for protection of the	

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front's sea lines of communication and for amphibious landings.

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Theater Nuclear Operations	
The Soviets clearly believe a war with NATC escalate to nuclear war, and the introduction of nuclear weapons	eventually could generally 25X1 precipitated by 25X1
NATO.	25X1
Despite a move towa	
selective nuclear options,  a massed nuclear exchange at some point, reg use of nuclear weapons is initiated	almost always 25X1 25X1 25X1
A priority mission of Pact nuclear-capable for which are Soviet) would be to destroy NATO nuclear gain and hold nuclear superiority. The following perfectors in Pact frontal nuclear operations:	r assets in order to
<ul> <li>Nuclear targets generally would be divided demarcation between those to be struck by stront-level assets.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Detailed front-level nuclear strike plans, bas on peacetime NATO force deployments, alm been prepared and could be ready for execu- preparation.</li> </ul>	nost certainly have
— An energetic nuclear target reconnaissance initiated during a period of tension and wou intensified during a nonnuclear combat continual updating of the nuclear strike pl weapons employment had begun, follow-or made as suitable targets were located.	ld be continued or phase to provide ans. Once nuclear
With two days' preparation, probably taking prehostilities phase, a front's nuclear strike a states of readiness that would permit the maximum number of strikes mum amount of time around order.	ssets could achieve
<ul> <li>Striking NATO's nuclear delivery systems priority. Other targets of high value, for ex- divisions, also would be struck on a major sca</li> </ul>	xample, maneuver
<ul> <li>Planning and execution of the fire plan would of targets of military significance, with little for collateral damage. Important West Europer, probably also would be struck.</li> </ul>	apparent concern
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	would be placed on ing the initial massive i		offensive	
nitial Campaign in t	he Western TVD			
round, and naval forces is a rapid ground arge-scale air operated is represented in the process would be organized as the control of the society of the soci	alls for a massive and consest to seize the initiative offensive into NATO to defensive into NATO's to defeat NATO nuclear seize or destroy porterevent a prolonged positized into three fronts, may echoslovakia, and Polar or elements of fronts of the first echelon would be the first echelon	in Central Euro erritory—supporair forces and and conventions and airfields tional war. Fire ade up of forces and and, time postationed in the document of the compose of t	ope. It en- orted by a d nuclear nal forces, s, prevent est-echelon s stationed permitting, e western d of East argest and he task of ngaging as Hannover e made up t Germany	
	and two armies formed divisions. Major reinforc			
	iet Belorussian Front.			
— The Polish Fi	ront de front de fron	han D !	in the	
Germany. In would consist armies plus ar moving along west toward t	d as exploitation forces in its more common role at least of two—and a East German army. It the northern coast, up the he Netherlands. This fro the Soviet Baltic Front.	e, this front m probably thre would be respo ne Jutland Peni	ort of West nost likely ee—Polish onsible for nsula, and	
	lovak-Soviet Front wou			

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Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2010/08/19 : CIA-RDP86T00303R000100070003-3  Top Secret	25 <b>X</b> 1 25 <b>X</b> 1
have the mission of attacking NATO forces in the southern part of West Germany. It would consist at least of an army made up of the five Soviet divisions in Czechoslovakia and two Czechoslovak armies (eight divisions). The Soviet-Carpathian Front would reinforce this front for operations in West Germany and then into southern France.	25X1
Pact planners regard NATO's tactical air forces in Central Europe as a formidable threat. They believe that airpower would be NATO's principal means for delivering nuclear strikes. Thus, they consider air superiority critical to the success of their European campaign. The Pact plans to achieve air superiority and neutralize much of NATO's nuclear delivery capability by conducting a large-scale, theaterwide nonnuclear air operation during the first several days of hostilities. This air offensive would be characterized by a series of massed airstrikes, designed to achieve tactical surprise, penetrating through corridors in Western air defenses.	25 <b>X</b> 1
Of the 3,100 tactical aircraft and 400 medium bombers available for use in Central Europe, the Pact would commit between 1,200 and 2,700 tactical aircraft and some 350 bombers for the air operation. The remaining aircraft would be used, along with the interceptor forces, to defend Pact territory and to provide direct support to the ground forces.  Operations in the North Sea and Baltic	25X1
Operations in the North Sea and Baltic would be designed to destroy NATO naval and maritime targets, especially carrier and amphibious forces. Principal objectives would be to deny the area as a launch point for carrier aircraft against the Soviet–East German Front, to prevent naval reinforcements from entering the Baltic, and to sever lines of communication through the North Sea to the European Continent. The Combined Baltic Fleet also would support amphibious assault operations in support of ground force operations against Denmark and West Germany.  Initial Campaign in the Southwestern TVD	25 <b>X</b> 1
The Southwestern TVD would include Pact forces in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria; the Odessa Military District (MD) in the USSR;	
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Soviet forces from the North Caucasus and Transcaucasus also operate in this TVD, although some forces from these districts would be likely to support thrusts on a major axis in the Southeastern or Southern TVD oriented against Iran and the Persian Gulf if operations were undertaken in that TVD  A Warsaw Pact campaign in the Southwestern TVD would be secondary to an offensive against Central Europe and would focus primarily on securing the Turkish straits and blocking NATO access to the Black Sea. Forces also would operate in Austria and northern Italy to secure the southern flank of the forces in Central Europe and to prevent pressure by Italian forces on Pact flanks in Austria. Movement of	
forces into Greece and western Turkey would give the Pact access to ports on the northern Aegean Sea. An offensive against eastern Turkey would prevent Turkish forces from being shifted to the straits and could open the way to movement by Soviet forces to the eastern Mediterranean through Syria or to the Persian Gulf through Iraq. A move into Iran in the context of a NATO-Pact war would be possible but could absorb resources needed to combat NATO forces. We do not believe the Soviets would have the resources to launch a major campaign into eastern Turkey and into Syria, Iraq, or Iran at the same time the Pact was engaged against NATO in Europe.	
It is not clear what role Romanian forces would have in wartime.  Generally, the Romanians have balked at any participation  other than homeland defense.	
role depicted for Romanian forces is that of a second-echelon front responsible for rear area security behind the Soviet and Bulgarian fronts that would prosecute the major offensive	
Naval Operations	
The Soviets probably would view American carrier battle groups in the Mediterranean as the primary naval threat to the southwestern USSR, and anticarrier warfare probably would be highest priority mission for the Black Sea Fleet. The nature of any surface ship augmentation from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean would depend on such factors as: the size of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron when tension began to build, the nature of the Western naval presence—particularly carrier battle groups—and the degree of emphasis placed by the Soviets on a covert transition to a war footing.	
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## Initial Campaign in the Northwestern TVD

This TVD would encompass the Scandinavian Peninsula and immediately adjacent waters. Forces in this TVD would come primarily from the Leningrad MD in the USSR, with reinforcements likely to be drawn from the Moscow, Ural, or, possibly, Baltic MDs. A principal ground objective would be to protect the flanks of the Soviet Northern Fleet while it was attempting to achieve control over the Norwegian and Barents Seas. These forces also would have the mission of denying NATO use of its bases in northern Norway. To accomplish these missions, Soviet forces could be expected to attempt to seize the bases along the northern coast of Norway either by direct assault across the Soviet-Norwegian border or through Finland. Amphibious or airborne landings also could be anticipated. In the southern part of the TVD, the Soviets would defend the Leningrad and Vyborg areas. Attacks into southern Finland toward Helsinki would be conducted if necessary to meet or preclude NATO advances in this region. Air operations would consist primarily of flights in support of ground operations in northern Norway or Finland and in southern Finland. Counterair flights, primarily over Soviet territory, would be flown by air defense interceptor units.

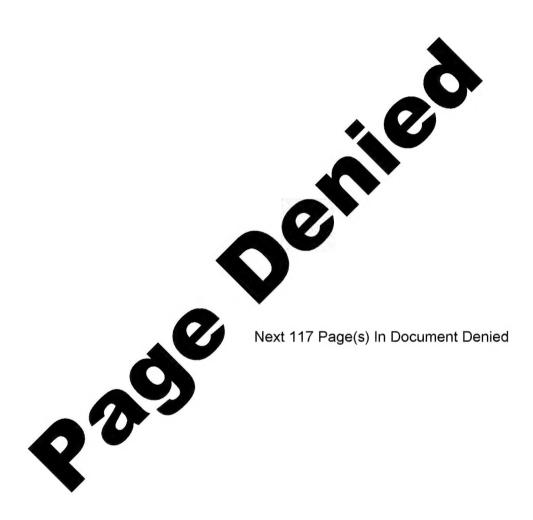
## Initial Operations in the North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans

The Soviet Northern Fleet is the most powerful of the Soviet fleets and would carry out the major part of combat operations against NATO naval forces. Its initial tasks would be to achieve control in the Barents, Kara, and northern Greenland and Norwegian Seas in order to protect the Soviet SSBN force and to prevent NATO from staging attacks against the Soviet homeland from those areas. The Soviets probably would establish successive lines of defense in this region with the intention of destroying NATO forces before they approached SSBN operating areas and were within range of Soviet territory. The main functions of Northern Fleet forces in their operating areas would be antisubmarine and antiship warfare as well as amphibious warfare, mine warfare, and coastal defense.

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